

Political Subdivisions Interim Committee

Long-Term Planning – May 2018

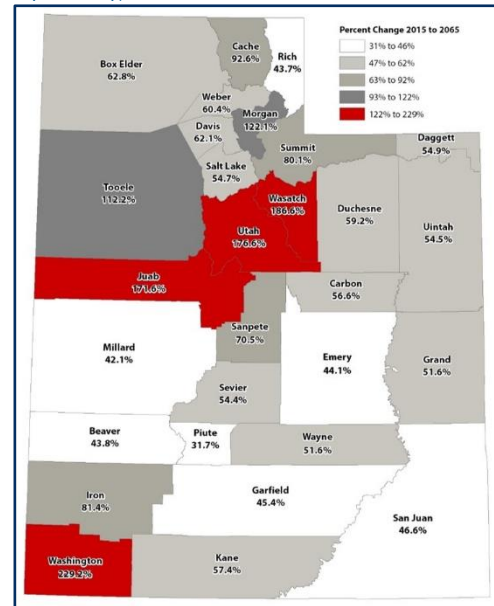
Background

Interim Rule 2-2-103 requires an interim committee to devote part of its first meeting to long-term planning for areas over which the committee has jurisdiction. To assist the committee in its discussion of long-term planning, the following summarizes key results from the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute's research brief, "Utah's Long-Term Demographic and Economic Projections Summary,"¹ and highlights the implications for the state's political subdivisions.

Key Results

- Utah's population is projected to increase from approximately 3 million in 2015 to 5.8 million in 2065.
- Utah's growth in each decade ranges from 9.7% (2050-2060) to 16.7% (2010-2020).
- The share of the population ages 65 and older is projected to double over the next 50 years.
- The population ages 5-17 is projected to increase but compose a smaller share of the population in 2065 than it does today.
- Projected growth is most prevalent in Utah's largest counties adjacent to Salt Lake and Utah Counties and in southwest Utah (see Figure 1).
- The number of households is projected to steadily grow, but average household size is projected to decrease from 2.99 in 2015 to 2.57 in 2065.

Figure 1: Percent change in Utah population by county, 2015-2065



Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute 2015-2065 State and County Projections

Implications for Political Subdivisions

Understanding population and demographic trends helps counties, cities, and public service providers plan for citizens' future needs. Utah's rapid growth is projected to continue and exceed national growth rates, impacting certain areas of the state more so than others.

Growth and urbanization bring both opportunities and challenges. The state and its political subdivisions will be faced with policy and regulatory decisions that impact where and how growth occurs, especially where population dictates a political subdivision's classification.

Key considerations include land availability, housing types and affordability, transportation, and utility infrastructure. Communities must weigh costs and benefits and establish funding sources to build and maintain necessary infrastructure. Interlocal cooperation and planning may play an increasingly vital role, particularly in the more urban areas where political boundary lines blur and neighboring communities share the benefits and costs associated with growth.

¹ Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, University of Utah: "Utah's Long-Term Demographic and Economic Projections Summary," July 2017, <https://le.utah.gov/interim/2018/pdf/00002042.pdf>.